

VZCZCXRO7314
RR RUEHBZ RUEH DU RUEHJO RUEHMR RUEHRN
DE RUEHTO #0365 1151724
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 241724Z APR 08
FM AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 8813
INFO RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 0150

UNCLAS MAPUTO 000365

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [ZI](#) [MZ](#)

SUBJECT: TSVANGIRAI VISITS MOZAMBIQUE

¶1. (U) Morgan Tsvangirai, leader of Zimbabwe's opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) visited Maputo on April 23. The visit was personally coordinated by the leader of Mozambique's opposition party Renamo, Afonso Dhlakama, who arranged for Tsvangirai to meet with former president Joaquim Chissano and current president Armando Guebuza. In a press conference at Dhlakama's residence at the end of his visit, Tsvangirai said that he had met with Chissano, as the

SIPDIS

chairman of the forum of African former heads of state, to request that he lend influence to resolve the electoral crisis in Zimbabwe.

¶2. (U) Tsvangirai said that he had raised three issues in all his meetings in Maputo: first, the ongoing violence that is causing a humanitarian crisis. By his count he indicated that eleven people have been killed, 400 detained, and thousands others somehow affected. Second, he said that he had asked for assistance in bringing the violence to an end. Third, he expressed concerns at the delay in releasing the results of the presidential vote. Tsvangirai said that he believed President Guebuza would like to see the crisis resolved through dialogue and not violence. Asked if he would be willing to participate in a runoff, Tsvangirai said he would address this issue only if the results of the election were released.

¶3. (U) Separately, former President Chissano told the press on April 24 that he advised Tsvangirai that Chissano could only get involved in finding a solution for Zimbabwe if the heads of state of SADC requested that he do so. President Guebuza has not yet commented on the content of his meeting with Tsvangirai.

¶4. (SBU) COMMENT: Tsvangirai did not appear to cover any new ground during his visit to Mozambique, and as yet we have no reaction from the GRM about his meeting with Guebuza. But Tsvangirai did himself no favors with the GRM by so publicly

SIPDIS

aligning himself with Renamo's leader Dhlakama. Always the opportunist, Dhlakama took the spotlight during Tsvangirai's visit, positioning himself as a senior mediator who is working to ensure regional democracy. At the same time, the Renamo leader is using the increased attention to campaign for the 2009 presidency, indirectly suggesting that a vote for the incumbent Frelimo party might result in the same state of affairs in Mozambique that Zimbabwe is suffering now. One beneficial aspect to the Tsvangirai visit is that an increasing number of Mozambican civic organizations, including the press, are questioning more and more the GRM's policy of "quiet diplomacy" towards the brewing crisis next door. END COMMENT.

Chapman